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We offer the following amplification of our thinking on the point raised by the Department in the reference circular airgram:

France's influence with the Government of Israel is that of a major ally. This is equally the way the Arab Governments must view it today. When the Arabs look at this relationship they therefore probably continue to perceive a potential threat. The Israeli lobby is very strong in France. Anti-Arab sentiments remain widespread among those Frenchmen who have never reconciled themselves to Suez or their country's "abandonment" of Algeria. French military assistance has been a major factor in Israel's survival. More, it made Israel the "tool and spearhead of the imperialists" in Arab eyes, particularly after the Suez-Sinai campaign. Israel's French-strengthened military potential kept Cairo looking East while France was militarily engaged in North Africa. It continues to be a governing factor in the formulation of policies in Arab states.

As we have noted, France is nevertheless currently in an excellent tactical position vis-a-vis the Arab states. The Algerian war is over. The Arab Governments appear to entertain high hopes for tangible benefits from their resumed relationship with France. The French Government also has some good cards to play: Aid, trade, investments and credits. But there are equally reasons for caution. France continues to have interests to protect in the Arab world. Indeed it seems likely that these interests will grow as the resumed Franco-Arab

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Arab relationship gathers momentum. Yet, the stability of the area is precarious. Further conflicts with unforeseeable results are not excluded. Threatening forces hostile to France may appear in the Middle East or North Africa...

The Suez campaign lies in the recent past. Neither de Gaulle nor Nasser will soon forget it. In these circumstances and until the Arabs have means to compel him to do so, we do not think that General de Gaulle is the man to renounce the leverage towards the Arabs which continues thus to be implicit in France's relationship with Israel -- although he will probably wish to de-emphasize it at this time.

For the Ambassador:

John A. Bovey, Jr.

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